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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15

DRC-01 /106 W
---------- 130094
R 190216Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6867
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINR, JA
SUBJ: AKIRA SHIGEMITSU TO BE APPOINTED JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO USSR

REF: TOKYO A-189 DTD FEB 17, 1970

1. GOJ WILL APPOINT AKIRA SHIGEMITSU AS AMB TO SOVIET UNION IN LATE OCTOBER OR EARLY NOV. CAREER DIPLOMAT, AND NEPHEW OF LATE FOREIGN MINISTER SHIGEMUTSU, HE HAS SERVED AS AMB TO NIGERIA SINCE FEB 1970. HE REPORTEDLY WILL ASSUME DUTIES IN MOSCOW IN EARLY NOVEMBER.

2. BORN JANUARY 15, 1916, SHIGEMITSU ENTERED MOFA IN 1938 AND GRADUATED FROM TOKYO UNIVERSITY LAW FACULTY IN 1939. HE WAS ASSIGNED AS TRAINEE TO POLAND (1939), LATVIA (1939-1940), BULGARIA (1940-1942) AND FRANCE (1942-1944). IN OCTOBER 1944 HE WAS POSTED TO BERNE AS THIRD SECRETARY. FOLLOWING WAR, HE HELD VARIOUS LIAISON POSITIONS IN JAPAN UNDER U.S. OCCUPATION (1946-1951). FROM 1951 TO 1954 HE SERVED AS SECTION CHIEF IN TREATIES BUREAU AND FROM 1954 TO 1957 AS
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FIRST SECRETARY IN LONDON. IN 1957 HE WAS ASSIGNED TO NEW

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DELHI AS COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY (CONCURRENTLY TO KATHMANDU). IN 1959 HE RETURNED TO MOFA AS COUNSELOR IN EUROPEAN AND OCEANIC BUREAU. HE WAS NEXT POSTED TO MOSCOW AS COUNSELOR IN MARCH 1961 AND REMAINED THERE UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1963 WHEN HE WAS NAMED MINISTER AT BUCHAREST. IN APRIL 1965 HE BECAME AMB TO RUMANIA. FROM JANUARY 1968 TO FEB 1970, SHIGEMITSU WAS DIRGEN OF MOFA UN BUREAU. HE THEN ASSUMED MOST RECENT ASSIGNMENT AS AMB TO NIGERIA.

3. ACCORDING TO REFAIR (1970), SHIGEMITSU HAD REPUTATION AMONG FOREIGNERS AND JAPANESE COLLEAGUES IN TOKYO AS DIFFICULT PERSON WITH WHOM TO DEAL. FREQUENTLY REFUSED TO ACCEPT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SUBORDINATES AND WOULD SUMMON EMB OFFICIALS TO GO OVER IDENTICAL MATTERS. MOREOVER, THERE WAS OFTEN CONFUSION AMONG SUBORDINATES AS TO WHAT SHIGEMITSU HAD SAID OR DECIDED AT UN BUREAU STAFF MEETINGS. REGARDING US-JAPAN RELATIONS, SHIGEMITSU SUPPORTED CLOSE ITES, BUT AT SAME TIME ARGUED JAPAN SHOULD QTE MOVE OUT AND PLAY INDEPENDENT ROLE UNQTE. HOWEVER, NO ANTI-AMERICAN BIAS WAS ATTRIBUTED TO SHIGEMITSU, AND HIS COMMENTS RE EIGHT YEARS SERVICE IN EASTERN EUROPE WERE ALWAYS HARDLINE ANTI-COMMUNIST. JAPANESE AND FOREIGN DIPLOMATS TENDED TO VIEW HIS CRANKY (OR FUSSY) DISPOSITION AS SOURCE OF THEIR DIFFICULTIES IN DEALING WITH HIM, RATHER THAN NATIONAL PREJUDICES OR IDEOLOGICAL CONVICTIONS.

4. SHIGEMITSU AND WIFE, AYAKO, HAVE TWO DAUGHTERS. REIKO (26) AND JUNKO (24).
INGERSOLL

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